



# MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # **053-2011**

## LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: March 2, 2011

SUBJECT: FDOT Construction Projects in Miami Beach

The purpose of this Letter to Commission (LTC) is to provide you with an update on the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Port of Miami Tunnel (POMT) and State Road (SR) 112 / I-195 projects.

### Port of Miami Tunnel Project

According to the January/February 2011 POMT Progress Report, the design and construction phases of the POMT Project are moving forward as scheduled (Attachment 1). The design plans for the MacArthur Causeway Bridge widening are at 60% completion. Final plans for the substructure of the MacArthur Causeway Bridge widening, as well as signing & pavement markings for MacArthur Causeway and Tension I & II Elements, have been released for construction.

FDOT has reported that the temporary asphalt overlay on both the eastbound and westbound lanes, as requested during a Palm-Hibiscus-Star Island homeowner's association meeting, has been completed. At this time, it is anticipated that the final restoration of the lanes will occur toward the end of the project's completion date.

On Wednesday, February 16, 2011, the Contractor began the excavation of the main shaft in the median in preparation for the arrival of the Tunnel Boring Machine in June 2011. Approximately 30,000 cubic yards of clean fill material will be excavated and transported off Watson Island. During this work, the Contractor first excavates this material from within the confines of the shaft, transports it to a temporary stockpile within the site perimeter to allow the material to drain, and then re-loads the drained material into trucks for disposal off-site. These operations are being performed in two (2) shifts from Monday through Saturday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. for a period of approximately 40 days.

Until October 2011, one westbound travel lane from the east end of the MacArthur Causeway Bridge to the west end will be closed Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to allow the workers to safely access the work zone in the median and also for bridge widening of the MacArthur Causeway. This lane closure excludes holidays and special events. Two westbound travel lanes will remain open at all times. City staff will closely coordinate with FDOT to ensure this work does not conflict with any special events, such as the Winter Music Conference, as well as with any other construction projects in Miami Beach.

On February 8, 2011, the POMT Concessionaire received a letter from the Palm-Hibiscus-Star Islands Association (Association) which expresses their objection to any daytime interruption of the normal traffic flow (Attachment 3). A meeting was held on Monday, February 14, 2011 with FDOT, City staff, and the Association to discuss the Association's concerns. At this meeting, FDOT advised that the lane closure provides safety benefits for both the construction vehicles and the motorists on the MacArthur Causeway, since it allows trucks to accelerate prior to merging onto the MacArthur Causeway.

The Association stated that from their experience, traffic volumes westbound on the MacArthur Causeway during the morning hours are at a peak until approximately 11:00 a.m. and requested FDOT to begin the closure after this peak period. FDOT advised that 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. are the same standard non-peak hour closures that have been approved for all work on the MacArthur Causeway currently and in the past. In addition, this closure was used recently in August of last year during the construction of the new eastbound bus bay and no complaints were received identifying any back-ups in traffic. FDOT agreed that if it was necessary, it would consider shifting the daytime hours of the closure slightly later in the morning. Since then, FDOT has been monitoring traffic during this closure and has not observed any delays.

The Association's February 8, 2011 letter also expresses concern with large trucks making u-turns at the intersection of Fountain Street and the MacArthur Causeway. FDOT advised that the contractor recently constructed a westbound acceleration lane for construction vehicles so this should no longer be occurring. In addition, the contractor installed a wheel wash at the end of the acceleration lane to avoid any tracking of debris onto the causeway. As another solution, FDOT and the Concessionaire offered to retain the services of off-duty Miami Beach police to increase enforcement at this intersection. Additionally, any drivers of construction vehicles who make this illegal u-turn will be dismissed from the project.

Other major upcoming work will occur underneath the MacArthur Causeway to minimize impacts to traffic on the MacArthur Causeway.

Other informational items regarding the POMT project discussed at the February 7, 2011 Transportation and Parking Committee meeting include the following:

- The barrier/flood walls are temporary and will be removed at the completion of the POMT project. Once this project is complete, flood gates on both ends of the tunnel will be in place to handle any potential flooding. The project's emergency management plan is a project submittal that not only is reviewed by the FDOT, but is also coordinated with the Fire Life Safety Committee established for the project.
- The design of the entrance gate/portal will be reviewed by the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Aesthetic Review Committee. Construction of the entrance gate/portal will begin in 2013.
- The tunnel boring machine is presently under construction by the manufacturer and is anticipated to be delivered to the construction site in June 2011. There are several heavy pieces that will be transported by cranes into the median across eastbound MacArthur Causeway. This will occur during nighttime, non-peak hours in 10 minute intervals. The Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) plan will be coordinated with the City.
- No hazardous materials will be allowed through the Port of Miami Tunnel, per federal regulations.

FDOT also presented the POMT project at the February 22, 2011 MPO Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting. At this meeting, FDOT discussed improvements to the bicycle/pedestrian detour currently in place for the eastbound sidewalk and shoulder closure. Detour signs are expected to be installed in approximately two to three weeks. FDOT also informed the BPAC members of a recent change order for the widening of the roadway to include a bike lane eastbound on the MacArthur Causeway within the project limits. FDOT will only provide a shoulder westbound, since the MacArthur Causeway converts to I-395, a limited access road, and bike lanes are not permitted on these types of roadways.

### SR 112 / I-195 Roadway Project

The southbound I-95 exit ramp from westbound I-195 will be closed on Thursday, March 3, 2011 from 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., Friday, March 4, 2011 from 10:00 p.m. to 11:00 a.m., and Saturday, March 5, 2011 from 11:45 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. During this closure, FDOT will be installing concrete pavement. Motorists will be detoured north on I-95, exit at NW 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, and then west in order to continue south on I-95. Additional detour signs will be installed at the on-ramp from Alton Road south/north to WB SR 112 advising motorists of closures on the I-95 SB ramp.

Through May 2012, the contractor will be widening the roadway, which will result in the intermittent partial closure of eastbound and westbound traffic between SR 9A/I-95/NW 10 Avenue and Biscayne Bay as follows:

#### Single lane closures

- 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. – Sunday through Thursday
- 9 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. – Monday through Thursday
- 12 a.m. to 9 a.m. – Friday
- 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. – Saturday
- 12 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. – Sunday

#### Dual lane closures (contractor may reduce traffic to one lane only)

- 12 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. – Monday through Thursday
- 2 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. – Friday and Saturday
- 2 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. – Sunday

City staff will be coordinating the MOT plans for all construction projects that impact Miami Beach with both FDOT and Miami-Dade County (County). Monthly coordination meetings with FDOT and the County have been occurring, and the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 25, 2011. City staff will be closely coordinating all construction activities with FDOT, the County, and their contractors and will keep you informed on all aspects.

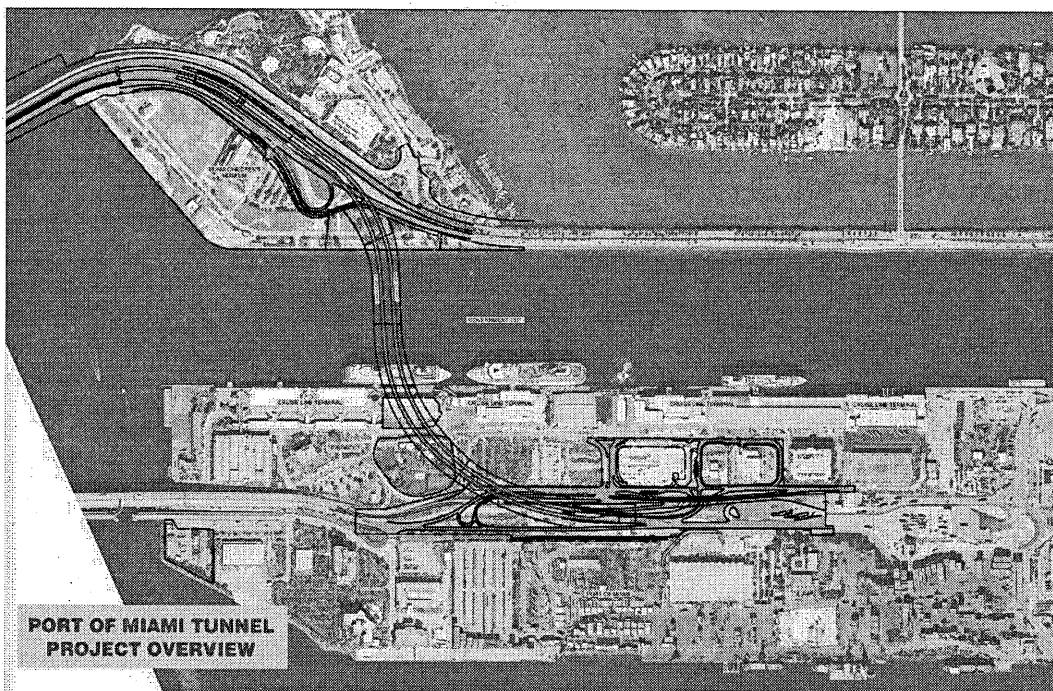
Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Attachment:

1. January/February 2011 POMT Progress Report
2. Palm-Hibiscus-Star Island Association Letter

  
JGG/FHB/HDC/FV/RS/CB

## POMT Progress Report – January 26 – February 21, 2011



<b>NOTICE TO PROCEED #1 – DESIGN</b>	OCT 15, 2009	<b>CONCESSION AGREEMENT:</b>	35 YEARS
<b>NOTICE TO PROCEED #2 - CONSTRUCTION</b>	MAY 24, 2010	<b>DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION DURATION:</b>	55 MONTHS
<b>PROJECTED CONSTRUCTION SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION</b>	MAY 15, 2014	<b>CONCESSIONAIRE:</b>	MAT CONCESSIONAIRE, LLC
<b>CONSTRUCTION COST:</b>	\$607,000,000	<b>DESIGN/BUILD CONTRACTOR:</b>	BOUYGUES CIVIL WORKS FLORIDA (BCWF)
<b>MILESTONE PAYMENTS DURING CONSTRUCTION:</b>	\$100,000,000	<b>OPERATOR / MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR:</b>	TRANSFIELD / VMS
<b>MILESTONE PAYMENT AT FINAL ACCEPTANCE:</b>	\$350,000,000	<b>FDOT OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE &amp; CEI:</b>	PB AMERICAS

**CURRENT MAJOR ACTIVITIES:*****Design:*****Watson Island**

Final plans for the Substructure of MacArthur Causeway Bridge widening, Signing & Pavement Markings for MacArthur Causeway and Tension I & II Elements have been released for construction, as well as the revisions for the Drilled Shaft and MacArthur Causeway Roadway Plans previously released for construction. The Tunnel Lining Final plans, ITS (60%) plans and Foundation Certifications are currently under review by the Department. Review and comment resolution meetings are on-going. A revised

Master Signage Plan for the overall project was submitted to the Department and the Department has provided comments to the Concessionaire. The comment resolution meeting is scheduled for February 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Dodge Island**

The Dodge Island (60%) Plans, as well as the Final Railroad Plans have been received by the Department and are under review. The soil and utility investigation work was completed on Dodge Island.

#### ***Construction:***

#### **Watson Island**

Contractor completed the work on the east Concrete Soil Mix (CSM) wall access road. The Contractor has begun the excavation of the tunnel pit, as well as the soil improvement of the tunnel breaking plug located on Watson Island. Construction of Type II tension elements and tie-backs has been completed. Micro-tunneling operations for sewer line relocation across MacArthur Causeway is on-going.

Contractor has also begun to work on the utilities for the site installation of the tunnel support operations (water treatment plant, the concrete batch plant, cooling system and power system) which will all be located under the MacArthur Causeway Bridge.

#### **Dodge Island**

Contractor began the FEC rail removal work and is approximately 80% complete. In addition, contractor has completed the relocation of the AB Loop Communications Duct Bank and is working on the clearing and grubbing of the construction site on Dodge Island.

The Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) is currently being assembled and will begin testing and commissioning in March 2011. The TBM machine is expected to arrive to the project in early June 2011. Contractor continues to work on the temporary electrical service point that will supply power to the TBM on Watson Island. In addition, construction of the precast plant for the tunnel segment construction is on-going, the foundation is complete and the steel building erection has begun.

#### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH / RECRUITMENT EFFORTS:**

The Concessionaire continues a vigorous outreach and recruitment effort. As of January 31<sup>st</sup>, the project peaked at 172 employees, which includes 95 office staff and 77 craft workers.

Project team has also met with various stakeholders as part of the on-going community outreach effort to provide an overview of the upcoming work phases on Watson Island. The Concessionaire hosted several educational presentations at Miami-Dade County Engineering Academy schools to provide an overview of the project and the tunneling process as part of the project's educational effort for Engineering Week.

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#### **UPCOMING MAJOR ACTIVITIES:**

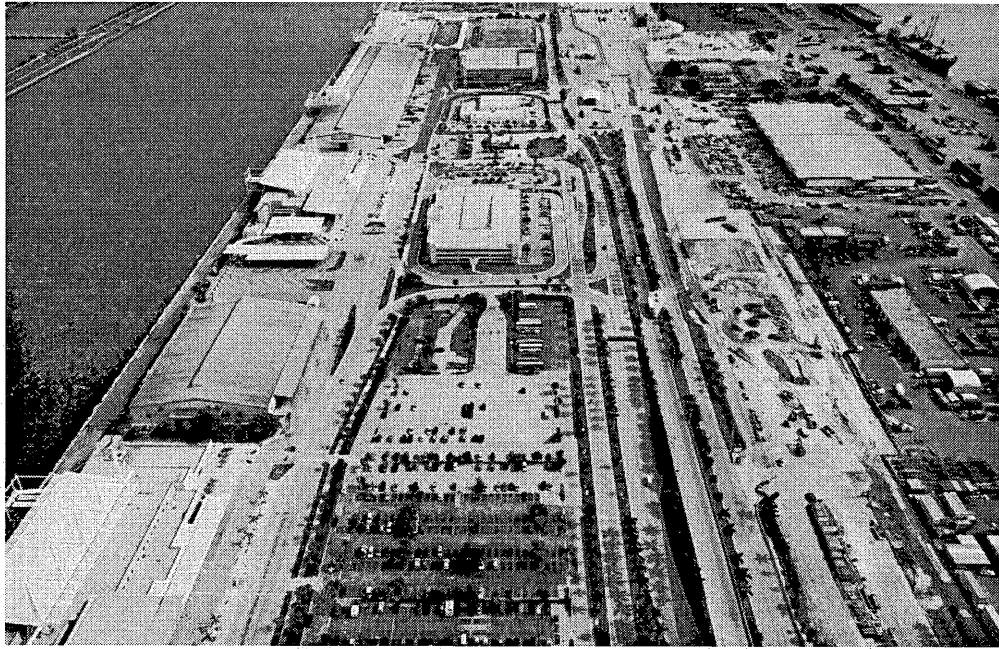
The Contractor will continue to work on the TBM launching pit on Watson Island and the water and sewer work as well. In addition, the Contractor will begin the relocation of major utilities on Dodge Island.

#### **PROJECTED COMMUNITY OUTREACH / RECRUITMENT EFFORTS:**

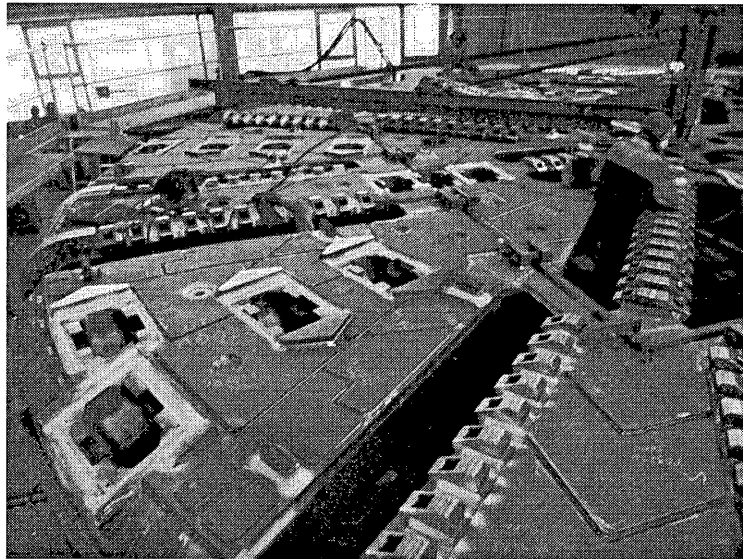
The Contractor will continue to meet with stakeholders to update them on upcoming phases of work. In addition, the Contractor will continue working on various educational outreach programs which will be completed during Engineering Week at the end of February. The Contractor continues to review resumes and is performing interviews for positions needed for the upcoming construction phases.



***Watson Island – New Parrot Jungle Trail & New Eastbound Lanes on  
MacArthur Causeway & Support of Excavation Work (1-27-11)***



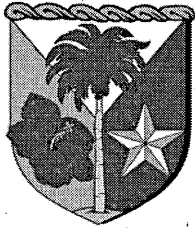
***Dodge Island – Roadways / Old Port Gate (1-27-11)***



***Tunnel Boring Machine Assembly (1/2011)***



***Tunnel Boring Machine Assembly (1/2011)***



*Palm • Hibiscus • Star*  
ISLANDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

February 8, 2011

Christopher Hodgkins  
Vice President  
Miami Access Tunnel  
MAT Concessionaire LLC  
3750 NW 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 225  
Miami, FL 33178

**RE: Objection to the Daytime Lane Closures on the MacArthur Causeway Traffic**

Dear Mr. Hodgkins,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and residents of the Palm-Hibiscus-Star Islands Association, I am writing to you to voice our collective strong objection to the Daytime Lane Closures on the MacArthur Causeway. We received the Press Release notification outlining the plan to close the left-side lane on the Westbound MacArthur Causeway from the East end of the MacArthur Causeway Bridge to the West side of the Bridge for 8 months, between the hours of 9 AM and 3:30 PM on weekdays.

This is not acceptable to us after having numerous meetings at which we were told there would not be any daytime interruption of the normal traffic flow. This plan is to no doubt be followed by the same interruption of the eastbound traffic at some time in the future. The daytime lane closures adversely impact our residents as they travel to and from work, school, shopping, travel and other activities of normal life. The MacArthur Causeway is the link from our relatively peaceful Island community to the rest of the South Florida community. We feel this will also adversely impact the economy of our area due to the traffic interruption. The plan is totally unacceptable to us.

We have already had to deal with the current interruptions, the large trucks that come onto Palm Island to turn around and those that make a U-turn at the Fountain Street/MacArthur intersection. Many of those are so large that they cannot make the turn and either have to go up on the sidewalk or back up in traffic at that location, which totally blocks traffic. Enough is enough!

We want you to review your current plan and alter the lane closure to the nighttime hours so there is little disruption of our normal life. Your revised plan needs to eliminate the hardship proposed for our residents and other Miami Beach residents and visitors to our area who rely on the MacArthur Causeway for their daily lives. Secondly, I would request that you and the appropriate staff come to a "Town Hall" meeting that we will hold ASAP to hear from our residents.

We ask that you respond to our concerns as soon as possible. As you know, we have tried to cooperate with you and the other agencies involved in the Miami Tunnel Project. We have provided you with several opportunities to address our Board of Directors and attend our Homeowners Meetings to hear our concerns. The current plan for daytime closures was not included in your previous plans and we find it a hardship that we cannot accept.

Please get back to me by Friday of this week by return mail or contact our Executive Director, Tim Rose, by phone at 305-299-2617, by e-mail at [tim.rose@phsislands.org](mailto:tim.rose@phsislands.org) or by mail at 152 Palm Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33139. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Hans C. Mueller  
President

Cc: City of Miami Beach City Commission  
County Commissioner Bruno Barreiro  
PHS Islands Board of Directors